

GRETNA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Beginning

Band

Information



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Why Participate in Band?

The benefits a child will reap through participation in instrumental music programs are tremendous! The development of musical skills and the ability to play an instrument are two of the most obvious. You and your child will be investing time and money in skills that will last a lifetime. Nearly everyone, regardless of age or physical condition, can enjoy playing a musical instrument alone or with a wide variety of groups over the course of a lifetime.

Although the musical benefits of participation in band are enormous, the non-musical benefits are nearly as exciting, and certainly very important. Here are just a few non-musical ways in which your child will grow through participation in band:

***Teamwork and Cooperation-**In band, it is very important for each member to give him or her "all" 100% of the time. There is never one person who is more important than any other; no one "sits on the bench" in band. Because of this, band becomes a great place to teach students how to work together and depend on one another.

***Opportunity for Success-**Anyone who had the opportunity to see the movie, Mr. Holland's Opus, realizes that in band, all students can feel successful. In a world where not everyone finds success in every activity, it is important to realize that everyone can succeed in music at his or her own level. As music educators, our job is to help each student succeed!

***Social Development-**Band provides many opportunities for students to interact in ways otherwise not possible in the typical school setting. As students continue their involvement in band programs, activities such as high school marching band, band trips, festivals, and competitions provide avenues for developing leadership and relationship-building skills.

***Mental Development-**Music is one of very few activities that engages both sides of the brain at one time. Musicians make use of the left (or "concrete") side of their brains when reading music, counting, and following the conductor, while the right (or "creative") side is used to produce the type of emotional expression that makes music exciting to hear and play. A person who is experienced at processing information in both sides of the brain at one time will be successful in many areas of everyday living. In addition, countless research studies indicate that students who participate in instrumental music tend to be, or become, very successful in other areas of school curriculum, including reading, math, language, and standardized tests.

Research Findings

*Students with coursework/experience in music performance and music appreciation scored higher on the SAT: 53 points higher on the verbal and 39 points higher on the math for music performance, and 61 points higher on the verbal and 42 points higher on the math for music appreciation than students with no arts participation.

-1999 College-Bound Seniors National Report: Profile of SAT Program Test Takers, The College Entrance Examination Board, Princeton, New Jersey.

*According to the College Board, students involved with music scored an average of 100 points higher on SAT tests than students who are not involved with music. The longer a student has been involved with music instruction, the greater the difference.

-College Board Survey of SAT Test Takers 2000.

*Dr. James Catterall of UCLA analyzed the school records of 25,000 students from the NELS88 Database as they moved through school. He found that students who studied music had higher grades, scored better on standardized tests, and had better attendance records.

-Dr. James Catterall, UCLA, 1997.

The arts create jobs, increase the local tax base, boost tourism, spur growth in related businesses (hotels, restaurants, printing, etc.) and improve the overall quality of life for our cities and towns. On a national level, nonprofit arts institutions and organizations generate an estimated \$27 billion in economic activity and return \$3.4 billion in federal income taxes to the U.S. Treasury each year. In addition, more than 1.3 million Americans are employed in the not-for-profit arts industry.

-American Arts Alliance Fact Sheet, October 1999.

*In the Kindergarten classes of the school district of Kettle Moraine, Wisconsin, children who were given music instruction scored 48 percent higher on spatial-temporal skill tests than those who did not receive music training.

-Rauscher, F.H. and Zupan, M.A. (1999). Classroom keyboard instruction improves kindergarten children's spatial-temporal performance: A field study. Manuscript in press. Early Childhood Research Quarterly.

*One of the issues for at-risk youth is drug and alcohol abuse. A 1999 report released by the Texas Commission on Drugs and Alcohol abuse found that students involved in band or orchestra (when compared against other student activities) reported the lowest lifetime and current use of all substances (alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.)

-1000 Texas Commission on Drug and Alcohol Abuse)

*Music making offers extensive exercise for brain cells and their synapses (connections.) It would be difficult to find another activity that engages so many of the brain's systems. Synapses between brain cells strengthen with use just as muscles do, and there is good reason to believe that music making increases the brain's capacity by improving these synapses.

-"The Music in Our Minds" by Norman M. Weinberger. Published in Educational Leadership, Vol. 56, No. 3: November 1998.

Getting an Instrument-GPS Approved List

After each student, their parents, and the Band Director have decided what instrument should be played, families can begin the process of renting or buying an instrument. The Gretna Public Schools provides this list of approved musical instruments. When renting or buying a new instrument, you should select a model from this list.

- Flute: Armstrong 104, Buffet 861-O, Gemeinhardt 2SP, Jupiter 507S or Jupiter 511S, Jupiter Carnegie CF50, Pearl 511, Selmer FL 300S or N, and Yamaha YFL225S or 221.
- Oboe: Selmer USA 1492B and Yamaha YOY 211. (ALL OBOES MUST HAVE MEDIUM SOFT FIBERCANE REEDS).
- Clarinet: Wood Clarinets: Buffet B11, Buffet 8500/8501, Selmer CL 200 and Yamaha YCL34 or YCL 450N Ebonite Clarinets: Armstrong 4001, Buffet B12, Jupiter 631N, Jupiter Carnegie CC60, Selmer CL 301 or Yamaha CL250. (ALL CLARINETS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH A VANDOREN B45 MOUTHPIECE OR YAMAHA 6C MOUTHPIECE).
- Alto Saxophone: Jupiter 787GL, Jupiter Carnegie CAS70, Selmer AS-300 and Yamaha YAS23. (ALL ALTO SAXOPHONES MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH A SELMER S-80C MOUTHPIECE.)
- Tenor Saxophone: Selmer 1244, Yamaha YTS23 and Jupiter Carnegie CTS 80. (ALL TENOR SAXOPHONES MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH A SELMER S-80C MOUTHPIECE.)
- Trumpet: BACH TR300H, CONN 201BY, CONN 1050B, GETZEN 390, HOLTON T-602, JUPITER CARNEGIE CTR60, JUPITER 600MS OR ML, KING 600 OR 601 AND YAMAHA YTR 2335. (ALL TRUMPETS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH A BACH 7C MOUTHPIECE OR BACH 7C COPY MOUTHPIECE.)
- French Horn: Conn 14D, King 618, Yamaha 314 Single and Holton H-602 or H-652. (ALL FRENCH HORNS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH EITHER A YAMAHA 30C4 MOUTHPIECE OR HOLTON MC MOUTHPIECE.)
- Trombone: King 607F, Yamaha 446H with F attachment, Bach TB300, Besson BE639-1-O Conn 22H, Getzen 351, Holton TR-602, Jupiter Carnegie CTB 40, Jupiter 432L, Jupiter 432RL, King 606 and Yamaha YSL354. (ALL TROMBONES MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH A BACH 12C MOUTHPIECE OR BACH 12C COPY MOUTHPIECE.)
- Baritone: Holton B-601 R, Jupiter 168L, King 625 and Yamaha YEP 201 or 211. (ALL BARITONES MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH A BACH 12C MOUTHPIECE OR BACH 12C COPY MOUTHPIECE.)
- Percussion Kit: CB 700 Model 8674, Ludwig M-649 or M-650, UMI Model 6300, Ross Educator Percussion Kit, Vic Firth model V8705 and Vic Firth model V8806. A 2 1/2 octave bell set will have at least 30 bars on the bells. (ALL PERCUSSION KITS MUST HAVE A PAIR OF VSDI or 2B DRUMSTICKS.)

PLEASE NOTE: Sometimes families have access to an instrument that has been previously used, not found on this Approved List. If you would like your child to use an instrument other than the ones listed, please take the instrument to a music store to be checked by a qualified repair technician. When buying a NEW instrument, you are strongly encouraged and cautioned to choose one from the GPS Approved List.

Band Lessons in the Gretna Public Schools

Sixth grade students who choose to participate in the band program will meet with the band director for two one-half hour group lessons per week. Lessons are scheduled during the school day at times mutually decided upon between the band director, sixth grade team, and principal. The lessons are free of charge.

The lesson groups are made up of students who play the same, or similar, instruments. As the school year progresses and students grow in their skill levels, students will occasionally meet as a full band. These full band rehearsals typically occur before a performance.

Student and Parent Responsibility

When a student chooses to begin band instruction, s/he chooses to make band a part of the school curriculum. Because success in instrumental music is so directly tied to class attendance and home practice, it is important that students and parents realize from the beginning that the choice to participate in band is a *commitment*. Very few people are able to pick up an instrument for the first time and instantly be successful. We must all work to achieve success, and the lack of practice and commitment is a large reason for some students' limited success.

Parents should also feel some responsibility for their student's choice to enroll in instrumental music. Without support and encouragement from parents, students may experience difficulty. As a parent, you are a vital part of the "success equation"-your attitude toward your child's participation may someday decide his or her success or failure. This statement is not only true for participation in band, but for countless other activities. Thank you in advance for your support and encouragement at home.

When Will Band Begin?

Band instruction for sixth grade students will begin on Monday, August ***** for students who are scheduled for a MONDAY lesson. Band students will receive a Band Lesson Schedule before *****. ALL BAND STUDENTS should be prepared by ***** with instrument and supplies. All of your purchases should be made by this date! Standard of Excellence, Method Book 1, will be provided for the band students in September.

Band Supplies

The following items listed are the supplies for each instrument. Those supplies not included with your rental will need to be acquired separately.

All instrument types	Name tag on case handle, folding wire music stand, and a pencil for the inside of the case
Flutes	Cleaning rod, small cloth swab
Clarinets	White cloth swab, box of #3 Mitchell Laurie reeds, reed guard, cork grease
Oboe/Bassoon	Swab. 3 medium soft reeds, reed case, reed soaking container, cork grease
Saxophones	Swab. box of medium La Voz reeds, reed guard, cork grease
Trumpets	Mouthpiece brush and cleaning snake, valve oil, slide grease
Horns	Mouthpiece brush, rotary oil, slide grease
Trombones	Mouthpiece brush and cleaning snake, liquid cream, slide grease
Baritones/Tubas	Mouthpiece brush, valve oil, slide grease
Percussion	2B snare sticks, brass bell mallets, stick bag

Instrument Display Nights

A display night will be held that will provide you with the opportunity to gather information about rental programs from area music dealers. You will have the opportunity to:

- 1) Meet your son/daughter's teacher and ask questions
- 2) Rent an instrument from an area music store
- 3) Purchase instrument accessories

The music dealers provide a variety of purchase, rental, and rent-to-own programs from which to choose. Generally, all of your rental payments apply towards an eventual purchase of the instrument. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE DISPLAY NIGHT, you may rent or purchase an instrument at your convenience from a music store. Please take the Gretna Public Schools Approved List of Instruments and the Band Accessories List with you. It is recommended that you refer to the lists to assist you in making your selections.

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10 TIPS TO BEING A BETTER BAND PARENT

1. Ask your child she s/he did in band today.
2. Provide a place in your home and set a time to practice each day.
3. Check your band student's homework assignments:
 - a) Ask him/her to name the notes for you
 - b) Ask him/her to show you the fingerings
 - c) Ask him/her to count or clap the rhythms for you
4. Encourage your child to play his/her instrument for you and let him/her know how proud you are of his/her work.
5. Make sure your child has all the necessary supplies: reeds, valve oil, mallets or drumsticks, music book, and a pencil.
6. Make sure your child's instrument is in good working condition. If you are unsure, ask your child's band teacher to check it.
7. Look into the possibility of giving your band student private lessons on his/her instrument.
8. Attend all school band events.
9. Take your child to band concerts at the middle school, high school, in the community, and professional groups, such as the symphony.
10. Listen to music at home.

6th GRADE BAND GRADING POLICY

Your grade in band will be based on these five areas:

25%--PLAYING TECHNIQUE. Each student will receive a grade four times per quarter for correct posture, hand position, embouchure/stick grip, and knowledge of fingerings or stickings. These are the performance skills that we develop in class and should be reinforced through proper practice at home.

15%--PRACTICE TIME.

In order to play your instrument well, you must spend some time practicing on your own. It is expected that you practice two hours a week (twenty minutes a day with one day off). You and your parents will fill out the practice sheets each week. You should have your parents sign them, and then return them to me during class.

25%--WORKSHEETS.

Each quarter we will do music theory worksheets to go along with our lessons in the Standard of Excellence method book. These worksheets will always be done in class rather than as take-home work.

20%--CLASS PREPARATION.

For a course such as a band, attendance and preparation are very important. Attendance includes getting to class on time with your music, your instrument, a pencil, and your agenda, as well as completing any assigned questions on music theory in the Standard of Excellence book. If you forget to bring your music or your instrument (or if you do not finish a written question in the book), it is difficult and sometimes impossible for you to become involved in the lesson.

15%--ATTITUDE, EFFORT, & CLASS PARTICIPATION.

Students who actively participate in class discussions, demonstrations, and who work toward personal and group goals will receive full credit in this category.

Band is a class that runs from year to year. However, if at some point in time you wish to withdraw your child from the band program, you may do so at the completion of the current semester. To request such a schedule change, you need to contact Mrs. Tucker and the Middle School counselor or principal **prior to the first day of the new semester.** Once a new semester has begun, requests for schedule changes will not be possible.

* * * * *

I understand this grading policy, and I agree to put forth my maximum effort in each area listed above.

Student Signature

I understand this grading policy, and I agree to help my child establish a regular habit of practice.

Parent Signature